

Amended Claims 1 to 14

(as changed in reaction to the Office Action of Oct. 21, 2003)

Claims

1. A dry, packaged semi-ready meal for preparing a meal of high gustatorial quality, characterized in that
 - the mixture of dry and dried ingredients is provided in two batches packaged separate from each other,
 - the first batch being composed of dried temperature-sensitive ingredients to be cooked and/or broken down in an aqueous phase and
 - the second batch consisting of temperature-insensitive ingredients to be broken down in cooking oil and/or fat, whose fat-dissolving ingredients
 - flavor the cooking oil and/or fat, and which,

after mixing same with the first batch in the aqueous phase in combination with the inherent taste and odor of the staple ingredients and the gustatorial and olefactory ingredients of the first batch, endow the meal to be prepared in each case after cooking with its typical overall gustatorial and olefactory impact.

2. The dry, packaged semi-ready meal as set forth in claim 1, characterized in that the staple ingredients in dried form are contained in the separately packaged first batch with the spices and/or herbs and/or seasonings and/or consistency-enhancing ingredients or additives for breakdown in the aqueous phase.
3. The dry, packaged semi-ready meal as set forth in claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the herbs and spices in combination in the oil phase are each ground to a degree relative to the other so that optimum release of each gustatorial component occurs at the same oil temperature.
4. The dry, packaged semi-ready meal as set forth in any of the claims 1 to 3, characterized in that legumes are used as the staple ingredients.
5. The dry, packaged semi-ready meal as set forth in any of the claims 1 to 3, characterized in that rice is used as the staple ingredient.
6. The dry, packaged semi-ready meal as set forth in any of the claims 1 to 3, characterized in that pasta is used as the staple ingredient.
7. The dry, packaged semi-ready meal as set forth in any of the claims 1 to 3, characterized in that cereals are used as the staple ingredient.
8. The dry, packaged semi-ready meal as set forth in any of the claims 1 to 3, characterized in that soya extrudate is used as the staple ingredient.

9. A method of preparing a meal from a dried semi-ready meal as set forth in any of the claims 1 to 8, characterized by the steps:
- flavoring cooking oil and/or fat with the temperature-insensitive ingredients of the second batch by heating,
 - breaking down the temperature-insensitive ingredients contained in the first batch together with the staple ingredients to be cooked in the aqueous phase, and
 - mixing the aqueous phase with the flavored cooking oil and/or fat.
10. The method as set forth in claim 9, characterized in that mixing the aqueous phase with the flavored cooking oil and/or fat is done after cooking the staple ingredients in the aqueous phase.
11. The method as set forth in claim 9, characterized in that mixing the aqueous phase with the flavored cooking oil and/or fat is done before the staple ingredients are done.
12. The method as set forth in any of the claims 9 to 11, characterized in that fresh staple ingredients are frosted and/or seared with the flavored cooking oil and/or fat before then being mixed and cooked with the ingredients of the first batch in the aqueous phase.
13. The method as set forth in any of the claims 9 to 11, characterized in that the cooking oil and/or fat is heated for flavoring with the ingredients of the second batch to a temperature in the range 120°C to 170°C.
14. Use of a dried, packaged semi-ready meal as set forth in any of the claims 1 to 3 for preparing a meal on sale in vending machines.